

## EMBRACE DRUG REIMPORTATION

**HON. NICK J. RAHALL II**

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 7, 2004*

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, today I ask a very serious question. Why is it, the Cheney-Bush bunch allow us to import foreign made flu vaccines, but won't allow Americans to shop for American made cheaper drugs across our borders?

We all know the importance of getting our flu vaccines every year. The Washington Post reports that last year's flu season was the worst flu season we've had in 4 years, and the flu killed 142 people. As all Americans are aware, there is another flu vaccine crisis in our country.

America's supply of the flu vaccine has practically been cut in half, because the world's second-leading supplier, The Chiron Corp. based in Britain, was shut down because of contamination reported in its batches of the vaccine.

48 million vaccines were due to be shipped before this shutdown. I repeat, 48 million doses of this vaccine were to be imported into this country, to help combat a life-threatening illness.

Mr. Speaker, I speak to address a glaring policy inconsistency on the part of the Cheney-Bush administration.

Why is it, that a long-standing health policy, that is wildly effective and successful, be permitted with respect to one killer, but denied to every other disease?

142 people died from the flu last year, and it causes outrage and action. 250,000 people die from heart attacks before they even get to the hospital each year, and it's accepted as just another statistic.

How many of these 250,000 could have been saved, if only they'd had medicine to lower their cholesterol?

How many of these 250,000 could have been saved, if only they'd been able to afford their medicine?

According to a recent press release from the University of Michigan Health System, nearly half of patients who have a prescription for any of the cholesterol-fighting drugs called statins fail to fill their prescription every time—or stop filling it altogether! The University goes on to say that the higher the prescription cost, the lower the number of prescriptions filled.

Let's ignore, for a moment, that Europe has been importing drugs safely and effectively for over 20 years.

Let us also ignore that countries like Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France also have higher life expectancies and lower child mortality rates than the United States does.

But let us not ignore a new FDA proposal. A proposal that would require customs agents to return all drugs sent from foreign addresses back to their senders.

William Hubbard, a senior associate commissioner at the FDA, told Congress on June 7th, "We need to make a blanket assessment that these drugs are not safe for American consumers and they should be turned back."

Unless, of course, it's the flu vaccine.

And then it's OK if they come from the United Kingdom, as in the case of the Chiron Corp. Or if it comes from the world's largest

supplier of the flu vaccine, the French company, Aventis Pasteur.

Yes, there are criticisms about the safety of imported drugs. One might be able to look to this most recent flu vaccine scare and say that this is a perfect example of why we don't import drugs. The safety of the supply could be compromised.

I would say that this is a perfect example of why we should import from countries like Canada or the United Kingdom. They have safeguards in place, just as we do, that protect the integrity of the prescription drug supply.

On August 12th, the acting FDA commissioner Lester Crawford expressed his concern that al-Qaida may attack the supply of drugs coming into this country.

I will tell you that I am JUST AS CONCERNED about the 28 percent of older adults with diabetes who, as reported in the February 2004 issue of Diabetes Care, are going without food or other essentials to pay for their insulin.

Why, in the richest nation on Earth, with this so-called comprehensive new Medicare program, are people going without food to afford their drugs?

Why is the Administration so opposed to a program that would help so many?

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge not only the duly elected Representatives of the citizens in these United States, but also the President to do what is in the best interests of these citizens.

I urge both Congress and the President to embrace prescription drug re-importation and reject the influence of the pharmaceutical companies.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
PERSONAL PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 29, 2004*

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, all Americans know that gun control continues to be a serious subject of debate, right here in the District of Columbia, in the State of Georgia, which I represent, and across this nation. It's an issue of personal safety and of constitutional rights embedded in the fabric of our Nation.

I agree with those who want to restrict criminal access to guns. However, this must be done without compromising the constitutional rights of our law-abiding citizens.

I strongly support the right of law-abiding adults to purchase and own firearms for the protection of their homes and families, collecting, target shooting, and hunting. That's why I have and will continue to oppose any proposal that threatens this basic Second Amendment right.

I realize the concerns of some Americans who, in the wake of school shootings and other heinous illegal acts, call for stricter gun control measures. I understand those concerns. That's why I fully support measures that call for tougher sentences for the illegal use of firearms, to get offenders off the streets and out of our communities. I support stiff sentences of juveniles who use firearms illegally, and I support increasing the maximum penalty

for adults who illegally provide those juveniles with firearms. That's how we must keep our schools and communities safe.

Mr. Speaker, tougher gun laws should not infringe on the rights of law-abiding citizens, and Congress has both the authority and the responsibility to ensure that they do not. So, the question before us today is not whether Congress can repeal the District of Columbia's handgun and self-defense bans, it is whether Congress should do so. The U.S. Constitution, the constitutions of 44 States, Federal law, the laws of all 50 States, the vast majority of Georgians and of Americans recognize the right for law abiding citizens to use firearms for protection, and for other legal purposes. Only the District of Columbia prohibits a person from having a firearm assembled and loaded at home, for the purpose of self-defense. I believe that that's wrong. We should pass this bill and allow D.C. residents to protect themselves from crime.

UNIVERSAL NATIONAL SERVICE  
ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

**HON. RUSH D. HOLT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 5, 2004*

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a very important subject for the young people of my district and America, the draft. This week, the Congress considered H.R. 163, Universal National Service Act of 2003, which would require every U.S. citizen, and every other person residing in the United States, between the ages of 18 and 26 to perform a two-year period of national service, unless exempted.

Let me make clear, I do not support reinstatement of an active military draft system. Also it is very unlikely there will be a draft in the foreseeable future.

The legal authority for drafting men into the U.S. armed forces expired in 1973. However, the U.S. Selective Service System has been registering 18–25 year-olds on a stand-by basis. These young men could be called for service should an active draft ever be reinstated. Currently, women are not required to register with the U.S. Selective Service.

Young people, as well as their parents, across my district have heard about a draft bill, and these constituents are asking questions about the draft bill and want to find out its status. Congressman RANGEL and U.S. Senator FRITZ HOLLINGS from South Carolina introduced this legislation to reinstate an active draft and extend service requirements to women. I cannot speak for them about their motives behind this legislation, but they certainly do make a fundamental point: if we go to war, all Americans should share in the cost and sacrifice of that war. The authors point out that without a universal draft, this burden falls disproportionately on the shoulders of the poor, the disadvantaged, and minorities, as was the case during the Vietnam War.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 163 raises important questions about the current composition of U.S. armed forces. For example, Representative RANGEL argues that among 535 Members of Congress, only four have sons or daughters who presently serve in the military.